REMARKS

The application has been amended to place the application in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

Claims 1-13 were previously pending in the application. New claims 35-48 are added. Therefore, claims 1-13 and 35-48 are presented for consideration.

Claims 1-6, 8 and 10-13 are rejected as anticipated by KEZUKA et al. 6,831,048. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 is amended and recites that at least part of a step of dissolving a polymer by providing chemicals onto a surface of the substrate is carried out in an oxidation atmosphere that is created by supplying pure oxygen to the substrate.

The position set forth in the Official Action is that the method of KEZUKA et al. is performed in the open air, which the Official Action states meets the limitation of an oxidation atmosphere. Accordingly, the position set forth in the Official Action is based on oxygen being a component of air.

While the above characterization of KEZUKA et al. appears to be correct, nevertheless, KEZUKA et al. do not disclose or suggest that an oxidation atmosphere is created by supplying pure oxygen to a substrate.

As the reference does not disclose that which is recited, the anticipation rejection is not viable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 2-6, 8 and 10-13 depend from claim 1 and further define the invention and are also believed patentable over KEZUKA et al.

In addition, claim 8 recites that the step of dissolving a polymer is carried out in an inert atmosphere except while the step of dissolving the polymer is carried out in an oxidation atmosphere. Accordingly, the part of the step of dissolving the polymer that is not carried out in an oxidation atmosphere is carried out in an inert atmosphere.

The open-air process of KEZUKA et al. would not meet the limitation of an inert atmosphere because air is not an inert gas.

Accordingly, claim 8 is believed patentable regardless of the patentability of the claims from which it depends.

Claims 7 and 9 are rejected as unpatentable over KEZUKA et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 7 and 9 depend from claim 1 and further define the invention and are believed patentable over KEZUKA et al. at least for the reasons that claim 1 is believed patentable over KEZUKA et al.

In addition, the Court of Customs and Patent Appeals has held that to establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 891, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974).

Absent a teaching or suggestion of the recited elements or steps in the prior art, the mere assertion of obviousness in the Official Action is insufficient to establish *prima facie* obviousness of the claims.

Moreover, as to claim 9, each of the examples of KEZUKA et al. shown on Table 5 on column 15 of KEZUKA et al. show a rating of "good" with respect to cleaning the polymeric deposits such that additional cleanings would not be necessary.

Absent impermissible hindsight reasoning, based on the teachings of KEZUKA et al., a single emersion at 25°C for 10 minutes is sufficient to remove the polymer and repeating the removal step would not be required.

Accordingly, any suggestion of repeating the polymer removal would be based on impermissible hindsight reasoning based on information gleaned from applicants' specification. KEZUKA et al. do not teach or suggest repeatedly carrying out the steps. Therefore, claims 7 and 9 are believed patentable regardless of the patentability of the claims from which they depend.

New independent claim 35 recites at least a part of the dissolving the polymer step is carried out while supplying oxygen

to the closed space. Since the Official Action has characterized KEZUKA et al. as being open to air, KEZUKA et al. neither is in a closed space, nor has oxygen supplied during the dissolving the polymer step.

New claims 36-45 depend from claim 35 and further define the invention and are also believed patentable over KEZUKA et al.

New independent claim 46 recites that at least part of the dissolving the polymer step is carried out while supplying pure oxygen to a closed space. The analysis above regarding claims 1 and 35 is equally applicable to claim 46.

New claims 47 and 48 depend from claims 46 and 5 and further define the invention.

Support for the new claims can be found on page 4, lines 2-5 and page 17, line 3 through page 18, line 9 of the specification as filed and in Figure 2.

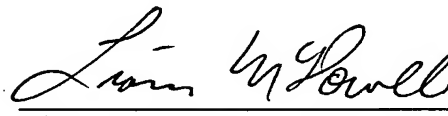
In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any

overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & THOMPSON



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